

Doctor breaks down Katie Couric's amnesia episode and its possible impact on her longterm health

"The overwhelming majority of people recover completely," Dr. David Perlmutter said of transient global amnesia.

By [Shania Russell](#) | July 8, 2026



Katie Couric in 2019.

Key Points

- Katie Couric recently opened up about suffering a frightening health scare, initially believed to be a stroke.
- However, examination in a hospital led doctors to diagnose her with transient global amnesia.
- Neurologist and bestselling author David Perlmutter, M.D., is breaking down how this sudden amnesia episode occurred.

[Katie Couric](#) recently got candid about suffering a [frightening health scare](#) — and now she's working to understand how it happened.

In a Tuesday Substack post titled [“The Day I’ll Never Remember,”](#) the 69-year-old journalist shared that on June 27, she suffered a sudden bout of amnesia that left her unable to recall the current month, year, and president. Couric's doctors initially feared that she had suffered a stroke, but further examination led to her being diagnosed with transient global amnesia.

In an effort to better understand what happened to her and raise awareness for anyone else who may encounter the condition, the former *Today* anchor published an interview with board-certified neurologist and bestselling author [David Perlmutter, M.D., FACN](#), for Katie Couric Media, allowing him to break down the science behind her diagnosis and its possible causes.

“TGA is a sudden, temporary loss of the ability to form new memories,” Perlmutter [explained](#). “A person is awake, alert, knows who they are, recognizes family members, and can carry on a conversation, but they can’t remember what just happened a few minutes ago.”



Katie Couric and husband John Molner.

This is indeed the scenario that Couric described in her initial blog post; the award-winning journalist said her day had progressed like any other with a trip to the farmer’s market, lunch with her husband, and speaking on two panels at an Aspen conference. But after the panels, Couric admits to having a gap in her memory, with no recollection of her husband’s decision to bring her to a hospital.

There, during an initial examination, doctors quizzed Couric about the date and current president.

“I got them wrong,” she wrote. “I wasn’t sure of the month. I thought it was 2024. And I believed Joe Biden was president.” She also couldn’t remember the existence of her newborn granddaughter.

Reassuringly, Dr. Perlmutter said of the condition, “Despite how dramatic it looks, TGA is usually a benign condition. The episode typically lasts several hours and almost always resolves completely within 24 hours, leaving only a gap in memory for everything that occurred during the event itself.”

As for what causes the memory loss episodes, the physician admitted that the answer is still unknown but noted that they are often preceded by “sudden physical or emotional stress” such as “vigorous exercise, heavy lifting, emotional shock, pain, sexual activity, coughing” or even “sudden immersion in cold water.”

He added, “The evidence suggests that the brain’s memory center, the hippocampus, temporarily stops functioning normally. The good news is that this generally appears to be reversible, with no permanent damage in the vast majority of people.”



Katie Couric in 2024.

Asked about long-term effects, Dr. Perlmutter noted that “the overwhelming majority of people recover completely,” adding that they “do not go on to develop dementia because of the episode” nor is there any indication that transient global amnesia “increases the long-term risk of stroke.”

For those who ever suspect they are witnessing or suffering such an episode, the neurologist advised that they “treat [the episode] as a medical emergency until proven otherwise,” because while transient global amnesia is a benign episode, it can also be confused with a more serious neurological condition.

In her Substack post, Couric at one point described the condition as “my brain failing to hit the record button.”

She went on to express relief that the situation was not more dire, writing, “While this was a freaky occurrence, it could have been much more serious. So ultimately, I’m relieved — even though several hours of a Saturday in June will always be missing for me.”